

# THE MORAL ADVOCATE.

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*"On Earth peace, good will towards men."*

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## *The State of Society.*

We are often told that the state of society forbids the abolition of war. It is equally true that the state of society is very far from being what it should be. It is also true that the state of society ought to be improved. The statesman, the philosopher, the minister of the gospel, are all engaged in effecting this great object. Even the humble country school-master professes to be laboring to promote this desirable end.

But in no respect whatever is improvement more necessary than in a moral and religious point of view. There can be nothing more obvious than that the state of society is not the standard of moral duty. This standard we find in the precepts of the gospel, which are never changed to suit the depravity of man. Is it possible that we can suppose for a moment that the depravity of some men, has dissolved the authority of those precepts over us: or that the Gospel itself has been so changed as to tolerate and perpetuate human depravity?

When we consider the great objects for which the Son of God took upon himself the nature of man, delivered his divine precepts, and died the death of the Cross—that it was for the conversion and salvation of sinners—to destroy the works of the Devil—to bring us from under the power of darkness and the influence of corrupt passions into a participation of the Divine Nature, we must be sensible that the Gospel is a dispensation exactly adapted to such creatures as we are.

However great may be the deformity

of the human character, however the earth may be covered with fraud, violence, corruption and wretchedness, instead of that harmony and happiness in which man was originally constituted, there is an ample remedy provided for the restoration of a fallen world—and that remedy is found in the Gospel. However the state of society may be corrupted—the Gospel itself retains its pristine purity. It borrows none of its maxims or precepts from human depravity, nor even from human frailty. But giving a clear discrimination between right and wrong, and ability to pursue the one and rise superior to the other, it points to that purity for which he was originally designed. And this improvement of the human character cannot be effected but by individual faithfulness.

But while we find abundant evidence that the state of society cannot absolve us from the obligation of observing the morality of the Gospel, & that it is only by an increase of that morality, through individual faithfulness that the moral condition of mankind can be improved, there are other considerations which are suggested by a closer inspection of the subject:

The skilful physician will not stand at a distance and contemplate the sickly countenance of his patient; nor abandon him to death because his health is destroyed. He will examine in what part of his system the morbid action exists. He will not only ascertain the seat and extent of the disease, but he will direct his attention to the immediate and remote causes by which it is produced: and the

means by which the causes can be removed and a healthy action restored. A similar course will be proper in the case before us. We are sensible that the moral system is diseased. Is it correct to resign to the ravages of this disease, till virtue shall expire? or should we endeavor to apply a remedy? In what does the morbid action in the moral system consist? What are the causes that produce it? By what means can it be counteracted, and the inducing cause removed?

On a slight examination of human actions we shall find much selfishness: a proneness to regard our own enjoyments and the happiness of others with a very unequal eye. Hence a disposition to grasp some favorite object, regardless of the cost to others. But while the rights and happiness of others are thus regarded with more or less indifference, there is a morbid sensibility to our own possessions & means of gratification. Those who are most ready to invade the rights of others, will resist with the most violence any attack on their own. Hence aggression, retaliation and revenge generally go hand in hand; and are seldom if ever found separate from each other. But of all the dreadful features of these malevolent passions, let loose without restraint, War stands pre-eminent above the rest—The Slave Trade—or more properly *Slavery* itself stands next. I say **SLAVERY**, rather than the *slave trade*, because the former is the Principal—the latter is only a branch—a subordinate part of the great system of human degradation and misery.—Public and private robbery would perhaps come next. I might pursue the enumeration down even to those secret feelings of enmity which too often discover themselves to be the seeds of the most atrocious crimes.

To all these, the gospel applies an ample remedy, as an “axe to the root of the corrupt tree;” by inculcating the Love of God supremely above all: and the love of “our neighbor as ourselves.” Where the feelings here inculcated are produced, the motives of selfishness are irradiated, and even the first germs of enmity, fraud or cruelty are destroyed.

But the precepts of the Gospel are not conditional. They do not enjoin us to practice the most exalted virtues, and cultivate the feelings of Love to God and man, on condition that we find no opposition in ourselves or in the world. On the contrary they bring us under the influence of the CROSS, and frequently a painful conflict with ourselves. There is no abatement on our part for the depravity or baseness of others. We are commanded to “do good for evil,” and “to overcome evil with good.” And no one who is acquainted with human nature and the facility with which aggression, retaliation and wrong succeed each other, can call in question the Wisdom of the Divine author of these precepts, or deny that they are peculiarly calculated to arrest the progress of violence, and promote the happiness of such creatures as we are.

By the prevalence of these precepts it is that we hope to improve the present state of society. Whoever comes under the influence of these principles obtains a double victory. He subdues the evil in himself: and he rises superior to the wrath of man in others. For as it is emphatically declared that to the name of Jesus every knee shall bow and every tongue confess.—So when the spirit of Jesus Christ prevails in us—in its genuine character of meekness, charity and love, even the most abandoned and depraved will frequently find themselves disarmed. It is not opposing

malevolence with weapons like its own, but with the spirit of Him that holds the principalities & powers of darkness "under chains to the judgment of the Great Day."

**Extract from the Fifth Annual Report of the Ohio Peace Society.**

Held at Waynesville, 2d of 9th mo. 1822.

The period having arrived when a fifth Report of the Ohio Peace Society is expected, the executive committee propose to give a concise statement of what has transpired in the course of the last year, & to suggest some grounds for the hopes of future success. From the different reports received, and other intelligence, it appears that a new era has actually commenced and made considerable progress; not only in the particular circumstances of Peace taken in a national point of view, but mankind individually are drawing towards one another, who by various publications of an improving kind, are aiding in the general amelioration of their species.—

And in some cases the females have been addressed upon the momentous concern of the pacification of a long distracted and warring race.

We find in an extract from the report of the Society, for the promotion of universal and permanent peace of Great Britain, that one hundred and forty nine females are on the list of subscribers. Let us recommend an imitation of those exemplary ladies and our fair sisters of Mill creek (Ohio) to all females, hoping to excite them to a participation in the sympathetic and benevolent labor in future.

Our very worthy friend and brother N. Worcester, has continued his favors to our society in transmitting to us several copies of each number of the Friend of Peace. A few of these copies have been sent to distant friends, where it was presumed they might be most useful. We are under many obligations to that gentleman and several others, in a relative degree, and shall be very thankful for a further continuation of their favors. We are pleased to find that a very appropriate address was delivered on the fourth of July, in Hollis branch of the M. P. S.

by the rev. Humphry Moore. "Happy would be the effects if addresses of such a pacific character should become general in all parts of our country, on every return of the Anniversaries of American Independence. How commendable are such addresses, compared with those which revive and perpetuate hostile passions and prejudices."

Let us extract a few sentences from the report of the Raleigh Peace Society of N. C. "The cause we advocate is the happiness of our species, we know of whom it is said 'he maketh war to cease to the ends of the earth,' we know also who hath said, 'the nations shall learn war no more,' &c. We know who hath called the peace makers blessed. With a knowledge so rich, so animating, how can we despair of ultimate success? Though our march be slow, it will be sure, and must end with peace on earth and good will among men.

"We would not bring politics to mingle with our principles; but permit us to express our firm conviction, that out of the custom of warfare, grow the heaviest chains which bind men in slavery. Let the soldiery the usual minions of oppression become fairly imbibed with the principles of Peace, and the pillars of despotism will crumble to the ground.

The feelings of peace are directly opposed to those passions which instigate to war and desolation. The more we defuse our sentiments, the more we trust (with the blessing of heaven) we shall contribute to the solid happiness of our race. With such hopes before us, let every member be encouraged to do his duty."

And further, they say in relation to the female institution near Cincinnati:

"We congratulate our friends on so important an acquisition; the influence of that sex is universally acknowledged and felt: let that influence diffuse peace and love over the face of the earth; let respectable matrons, who have nursed their sons with the tenderest affection, no more send them away to the work of desolation, and rejoice at their success, when they make women widows and children fatherless, or overwhelm an aged father and mother with sorrow, whose boy perished by their young hero's sword. Permit us here to remark that peace societies are connected with



and will be promoted by every benevolent and useful institution, however unconscious their founders may have been of this fact, without any systematic view of curtailing the ravages of war, the friends of Zion are spreading the gospel of peace, Bible and missionary societies are doing much in aid of our cause.

Let us make a few extracts from the 5th report of the Peace Society of London (Great Britain.) "It is a serious and important consideration, that till the christian world can, by the adoption of the pacific principle, bring their profession to the touch stone of the divine legislature, by this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another; at every step they take, every effort they make towards propagating the gospel, they will move like men in fetters, and find themselves impeded in their progress, in the dissemination of the pure principles of christianity, and towards the fulfilments of the prophecies, &c. &c."

(As our society during the last year have been able to do but little, our pecuniary resources being small, we will indulge in some detail from the London report.)

"Your committee impressed with the importance of disseminating the principles of Peace in other countries as well as Great Britain, have, during the last year, been actively engaged in endeavoring to extend their operations to the continent of Europe, to effect this object they have adopted measures to establish correspondence, a circular has consequently been printed in English, French and Spanish and sent abroad for distribution. Several of our tracts have been conveyed to France, Italy and Spain. A Society favorable to the cause of Peace, has been at length established at Paris, under the sanction of the French government, with fervent desires that all nations may follow in this particular, their example."

#### REPORT

#### *On the Penitentiary System.*

(Continued from page 60.)

Are our Penitentiaries places which are dreaded by convicts? Is the anticipation of being immured within

their walls, generally productive of terror? The observation and experience of years convince us to the contrary. Our Penitentiaries are communities by themselves. They contain so many societies of men of the same feelings, of similar principles, and like dispositions, erected by force of statute. They are so many commonwealths, insulated from the rest of mankind. Look at the Penitentiaries of Pennsylvania, New-York, Massachusetts, and the other states; what is the spectacle which they present? Several hundred convicts are mingled together, without regard to age, atrocity of guilt, or prospect of reform. All the characteristics of social intercourse are presented. There is neither shame nor repentance. All have been placed there by the arm of justice, for violating the laws of the land, and there is but little ground for contrast or reproach. The members of these little communities are comfortably clothed, comfortably fed, condemned to moderate labour, and easy tasks, permitted to have their hours of ease and recreation, indulged in talking over their exploits in the paths of guilt, suffered to form new schemes for future execution, and to wear away their term of service, under circumstances calculated to deprive it of every salutary effect. This state of things is truly appalling, and we cannot draw a picture in more vivid colours, than the one which is presented, of the oldest State Prison in the union, by the report on the Penitentiary System in the State of Pennsylvania, on the 27th of January, 1821. "It seems," says the Report, "to be generally admitted, that the mode at present in the Penitentiary, does not reform the prisoner. It was intended to be a school of reformation, but it is now a school of vice. It cannot be otherwise, where so many depraved beings are crowded together, without the means of classification or of adequate employment. There were in confinement on the

first instant, four hundred and ninety-four men, and forty women, convicts. A community of interest and design is excited among them, and instead of reformation, ruin is the general result." (m)

We must then draw the conclusion that the construction of our Penitentiaries is wholly defective, and calculated to defeat the object of the system. Large numbers of convicts are promiscuously crowded together: a sentence to the State Prison is not viewed with that terror that tends to prevent crimes; the allurements and pleasures of social intercourse, are kept up; the ignominy of punishment is forgotten; and with many hundred criminals, the State Prison is viewed liked the transportation to Botany Bay, by felons in Great Britain, as a welcome assylum.

The next error which we shall notice, as pertaining to our Penitentiaries, is the entire want of classification, if we except the division of convicts into sexes. Men and women are kept separately and here the rule of discrimination stops. This is indeed the natural consequence of the evil manner in which our prisons are constructed; yet defective as they are in this respect, it would be practicable, in many cases, to prosecute some more distinction among felons than appears at the present time. We know of no prison in the United States, where the convicts are divided into classes, with a reference to their own good. When once placed within the precincts of the Penitentiary, the grade of the offence, the age, the disposition, the indications of repentance, or the proof of their hardihood are all forgotten, and they comprise one great aggregate of offenders. The prevailing object is to make their labour as productive as possible, and to this object every consideration seems subservient. Here the most

(m) Report to Pennsylvania Senate, by Mr. Raguet, Jan. 1821, and letter of Mr. Miercken.

obdurate and experienced offender who has grown grey in the perpetration of crimes, and who has become familiar with the walls and discipline of prisons, who with equal thoughtlessness and hardihood, contemns the laws of God and man, is seen the daily, & in many prisons, the nightly companion of the unfortunate youth, who, from neglect of parental regard and watchfulness, the want of timely education, and the inclinations of correct early habits, have committed a single offence of a minor grade, and has been sentenced for the shortest term the law allows. Offenders for manslaughter, burglary; larceny, counterfeiting, and swindling, the felon of sixty and the felon of fifteen,—he who has shed man's blood, or put the midnight torch to his neighbour's dwelling, and threatened the existences of a whole family, and he who has passed a counterfeit bank note of five dollars, are doomed to a condition, where they are placed together upon equality, and become daily associates. Can we rationally talk of the reform of convicts under such circumstances? What is man? The creature of habit. We assert not the doctrine that all men are naturally possessed with an equal love of virtue and an equal abhorrence of vice; but we do assert that habits of thought, and habits of action, create settled rules of conduct that are grounded on moral excellence—fortify the character against all temptation,—and that they may also destroy the last trait of honesty, truth and rectitude, and render character the blackest type of human guilt. How many crimes, how many misfortunes, how many sacrifices of worth and promise, have been produced by indiscreet and vicious associations, that existed before men have violated the law, and fallen under the sentence, of a criminal tribunal; and yet by means of our Penitentiaries we establish in the execution of our laws, the most desperate, profligate, and dangerous association, that can well



be established by human invention, and expect that such a policy will prevent the perpetration of crimes, present a salutary example, and restore those who compose them, reclaimed and regenerated to the bosom of society! A State Prison must necessarily be filled with every description of offenders, from him who is the least obnoxious to the laws, to him who is the most flagrant aggressor. Felons, according to the ordinary principles of our nature, will assimilate in moral character by intercourse; and the standard which will be approached and adopted, will not be the lowest, but the highest degree of turpitude. The hardened convict will maintain his abandoned principles, and the novice in guilt will become his pupil and his convert. The greater offender will not go to the lesser; the tendency is the reverse. It requires no reflection to perceive, that without classification, our Penitentiaries, instead of preventing crimes, and reforming convicts, directly promote crimes, and augment the moral baseness of convicts. They are so many schools of vice—they are so many seminaries to impart lessons and maxims, calculated to banish legal restraints, moral considerations, pride of character, and self-regard. It is notorious that, in all public prisons, their tenants soon adopt certain principles of government and conduct, among themselves, and that they soon assume the form and semblance of a distinct and independent community. They have their watchwords, their technical terms, their peculiar language, and their causes and objects of emulation. Can we see any thing in this view, but consequences the most serious and alarming? Who fill our Penitentiaries? Take those of Richmond, Baltimore, Philadelphia, New-York, and Boston—and we shall find their tenants composed of renegadoes from England, Ireland, Scotland, France, and Italy, and other parts of the continent of Europe, united to convicts who are natives of the United States. Many of them were finished adepts before they reached our shores, and united to such of our own citizens as are equally well skilled in the perpetrations of crimes, they form a combination every way calculated to extirpate the last principle of honesty in the human breast. With this congregation of robbers, burglars, thieves, counterfeiters, and swindlers, of every description, we shut up all classes of minor offenders, and they mingle together, for months and years, without distinction. Many of them are of respectable parentage, and have been decently, and sometimes well educated; their hold on the respect of the world is not entirely broken; the feelings of repentance and self-respect, are not extinguished;—and they have not withdrawn their eyes from the paths that lead to reform, and to restoration. Many of them possess dispositions that are easily swayed, and sensibilities that are easily excited by reason and truth, and under proper discipline, could be reclaimed and reformed. But can we rationally look for such results, when they are turned into a Penitentiary with hundreds of criminals, who are daily rendered more wicked by example and precept? As to those State Prisons which have been erected in the interior of our country, they too have their desperate and hardened tenants, whose evil communications are palpably seen in the most baneful consequences. Let us ask any sagacious observer of human nature, unacquainted with the internal police of our Penitentiaries, to suggest a school where the commitment of the most pernicious crimes could be taught with the most effect; could he select a place more fertile, in the most pernicious results, than the indiscriminate society of knaves and villains of all ages and degrees of guilt, with strong and furious passions, hardy constitutions, and sound health, comfortably clothed, sumptuously fed, and

left to the performance of trifling duties? Your committee are not indulging in speculation. They say that our Penitentiaries are destitute of the classification of convicts, of any regard to the degree of individual guilt, and any regard to age—and without any regard to reclamation. We say that an indiscriminate intercourse exists among the convicts, and that the different shades of guilt and atrocity are blended together. We say that both, by day and by night, with few or no exceptions, they communicate with each other;—that the most pernicious principles may be inculcated, the worst of passions inflamed, the most profligate maxims be rendered familiar—and all shame, honesty, and self respect be destroyed. We appeal to any Penitentiary in the United States, to show us the moral misapplication of this description. If there are exceptions, they are in some of the new Penitentiaries, where the prisoners are few, and the evils here spoken of, not yet palpably developed. The State Prison in Ohio, erected five years ago, already severely experiences the truth of what we here lay down. Such has been the information derived by the Chairman of the Committee, in a personal conversation with one of the most distinguished, and public spirited men of that State.

We shall here adduce some proofs to illustrate the assertions in which we have indulged. We could produce more than will be referred to, were it essential and requisite. We shall begin with Pennsylvania, and quote the Report to the Senate of that State, before referred to. "There were in confinement," says that well written and lucid document, "on the first of January, 1821, four hundred and twenty-four men, and forty women convicts. For want of room to separate them, the young associate with the old offenders: the petty thief becomes the pupil of the highway robber; the beardless boy listens with

delight to the well told tale of daring exploits, and hair-breadth escapes, of hoary headed villany, and from the experience of age derives instruction, which fits him to be a pest and terror to society. Community of interest and design is excited among them, and instead of reformation, ruin is the general result."

"This is a short but melancholy picture; it is but faintly drawn, but it is sufficiently strong to excite attention in every benevolent mind. The Grand Juries of our district, have for years past, presented to the public a similar portrait of our once boasted Penitentiary, and the late Executive has very judiciously directed the attention of the Legislature of the State to the subject." (n)

We shall next refer to the Statistical View of the operation of the Penal Code of Pennsylvania, prepared and published by the Society for alleviating the miseries of public prisons. "So many," says this publication, "are crowded together in so small a space, and so much intermixed, the comparatively innocent with the guilty; the young offender, and often the disobedient servant or apprentice, with the most experienced and hardened culprit; that the institution already begins to assume the character of European Prisons, and a seminary for every vice, in which the unfortunate being who commits the first offence, and knows none of the arts of methodised villainy, can scarcely avoid contamination, and leads to extreme depravity, and with which, from the insufficiency of room to form separate accommodations, he must be associated in his confinement." (o) We shall next cite the words of Mr. Hopkinson, whose celebrity as a lawyer and a statesman, give him a passport to the acquaintance of the American people. His whole let-

(n) Report to Pennsylvania Legislature, and Mr. Mecrekin's letter.

(o) Statistical View.

ter will be found in the appendix. "So far" says he "from reformation having been the effect of the System as heretofore practised, one of its worst evils is, that by throwing a crowd of criminals together necessarily of different degrees of depravity, they become equally wicked and corrupt, and skilled in the various contrivances to commit crimes and elude justice. It is a college for the education of men to prey upon society. A novice, who if kept from company worse than himself, might have been reclaimed from his first attempts, is here associated with old hardened and skilful offenders; he hears, with envy and admiration, the stories of their prowess and dexterity; his ambition is roused, his knowledge extended by these recitals, and every idea of repentance is scorned; every emotion of virtue, extinguished. Instances of this sort are numerous, both in the United States and in England. I consider this herding of criminals together, as a vital defect in the penitentiary system."

A letter, full of sound sense, from Bishop White, President of the Philadelphia Society for alleviating the miseries of public prisons, whose persevering and benevolent efforts are well known, goes to prove the facts above stated.

As we pass from Philadelphia to the New York penitentiary, we find but the strongest evidence to prove the total want of any judicious classification of prisoners. Our state prison has been crowded for years.—Convicts of all ages and all degrees of turpitude, have been placed together, and all the evil and fatal consequences of vicious communications have been exhibited. It was built to accommodate three hundred persons, and more than seven hundred have been confined in it at once—many of them foreigners from all the ends of the earth. Your Committee need appeal to no documents, to shew the total want of a proper division of con-

victs in our Penitentiary. The defect is well known to the whole community, and is as obvious to the eye, as the prison itself. Culprits come out far more depraved and desperate, than they were when they received their sentence. The young are advanced in the paths of guilt; the old, confirmed in their baseness; morals, instead of being improved, are broken down; conscience, instead of being restored to a tone of reproof, is blunted and banished. No statement of ours can be too strong on this point. The fact stands complete and conclusive.

The State Prison in Massachusetts forms no exception to the general want of classification. Unfortunately, the circulars addressed to several of the first men in Massachusetts, by your Committee, have not been answered or noticed in a single instance; we must therefore rely on that information which has been derived from other sources. We feel authorised to assert, that there has ever been a neglect of that division and separation of convicts, that discrimination between old and young offenders, and that prevention of evil communication, which constitutes the grand defect under consideration. We are, however, recently informed, that it is at present less to be apprehended in this case than formerly. (r)

Perhaps no Penitentiary in the United States has been managed with more wisdom, care and uniformity than the one in Virginia. Samuel P. Parsons, of the society of Friends, who has long been the Superintendent, and who if any man has capacity and zeal to perfect the System, possesses them in an eminent degree, and who has spared no effort to accomplish the original end of the institution, informs us that the want of classification of convicts is one of the evils which have caused the partial

(r) Vide North. Am. Review, No. 3, Oct. 1821,



disappointment of its friends and patrons. There is too much intercourse among the prisoners, too many sleep together, and the contagion of vice is apparent.

(To be Continued.)

### Address to Female Readers.

It requires but a slight acquaintance with mankind to discover that the female part of the community have an extensive influence over the other sex. And this becomes more remarkable in proportion to the improvement in civil and religious society. Nor is it strange that this should be the case. For as society improves in principle and manners not only are we disposed to regard the female character with more tenderness & respect, but that character itself becomes more amiable and interesting. It is also a pleasing reflection, and deserves to be mentioned as an auspicious event, that the female character stands higher at the present, than at any former period of time. In almost every quarter of the civilized world they are actively engaged in mitigating human misery. In the populous cities both of Europe and America the sick and indigent—the widows and orphans, are the peculiar objects of female benevolence and care. They penetrate even into dungeons—those abodes of wretchedness and crime, to dispense the claims of charity, and the messages of the Gospel. And no doubt those laudable and benevolent undertakings, in which the other sex take the most ostensible part, are much promoted by the powerful but secret influence of female benevolence and virtue.

There are still two deeply interesting subjects to which their attention is earnestly invited—They are *Slavery* & *War*. These are nearly related in prin-

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ciple—repugnant alike to the benignant precepts of our Holy Religion, and the tender sympathies of our nature, to which the female mind is so feelingly alive. Could female influence be generally secured on the side of humanity and peace, an important change in the state of society, and particularly in the U. S. would be quickly produced.

Can you, my female friends, reflect without distress on the thousands who are sunk in hopeless poverty, pinched with cold, and pining with hunger—not in populous cities where the lack of employment deprives them of the means of subsistence; not in dungeons, where their crimes have deprived them of the comforts of life—but in the very mansions of opulence and ease, where their patience, industry and virtue, minister not to their own wants, but to the pampered appetites of their oppressors? Can you reflect on the cruelties and indignities to which thousands of your own sex are exposed? the separation of wives and mothers from those endearing objects, to which their affections cling with an attachment stronger than death? While viewing with maternal tenderness the opening faculties of a darling son, do you suppose that you are nursing him to be the destroyer of his species—to strew the earth with human carnage, and cast widows and orphans on a cold unfeeling world? Can you reflect on these unpleasing yet important subjects, without bringing the enquiry close to your own bosoms, what positive and negative agency you have in these afflicting scenes?

By a *positive agency* I mean the influence that you may lend to oppression or war. You may, for the sake of securing the command of menial attendants, or conveniences, or luxuries, suf-

fer your judgment, to be warped aside, and the tender sympathies of your nature to be destroyed. You may indeed, instead of being the ministers of mercy, charity and love, become the very turn-keys of oppression and degradation! Allured by the fascinating show of uniforms and parades, and the eclat of military achievements, you may not only join, but powerfully heighten the popular delusion, and thus be justly numbered among the efficient agents in promoting the most awful calamities to which human nature is exposed—Scenes which you could not bear to behold, or scarcely to hear related, in that dread day when human actions are correctly weighed, may be placed to your account. It may even appear that you—tender and timid as you are, implanted the first seeds of ambition, enmity and cruelty in the infant mind: and nursed the poisonous growth! Such would be a positive agency—and though many of you may feel the answer of a good conscience, on such an examination, yet the question may be brought still closer. Possessed as you are of influence, have you exerted that influence to its full extent, to mitigate or remove these calamities from suffering human nature?

But even if you feel no condemnation for having thrown your influence in the wrong scale, nor secret regret for not having more nobly espoused the cause of humanity, still suffer your attention to be aroused to these subjects. As your talents are evolved, and your sphere of usefulness becomes enlarged, you cannot more effectually serve the cause of humanity and virtue than by exerting your influence for the abolition of Slavery and War. No subject can possibly be presented to your notice, in which you could more effectually dis-

play your genuine philanthropy, and those amiable feelings with which you are endued. And in no way could you more effectually promote the happiness of mankind.

EDITOR.

### *For the Moral Advocate.*

#### ARBITRATION.

This method of settling controversies has some striking advantages, although it does not promise infallible justice. For as men are fallible, their decisions may be expected, to be liable to the consequences of the lack of judgment, lack of information, or lack of integrity. But those uncertainties will apply to judges, juries, arbitrators—and to no description of persons more fully than to *Parties* themselves. Nothing more powerfully warps the judgment, or tries the principle of a man than his own individual interest. Hence it has been universally conceded in all civilized society that it is not safe for a man to be a judge in his own cause. Hence tribunals have been established and judges appointed for the decision of controverted cases, by which the subjects of controversy have been taken out of the hands of the parties. Even in the rudest state of society this principle has been adopted. However paradoxical it may be, it is still true, that in highly improved society the judiciary branches of government have become complex; decisions tedious if not doubtful as to justice. Hence tribunals created by the parties when this can be effected, possess some advantages. It prevents the delays and avoids the embarrassments of legal forms; but the most striking benefit is the cultivation of a pacific spirit, and a disposition to moderation, that properly speaking, forms a part of the arbitration system.

Were individuals who happen to be brought into contests on account of their property or their privileges to be left to themselves—to settle their



dispute in the best manner they could—were it understood that in case of failing to think alike, there was no other resort than force and combat—that leaving the merits of the question, it was right to settle it by the strength, agility, or dexterity of the parties, and that it was honorable to bring disputes to this result—how wretched would be the condition of mankind! Ask the man who has enjoyed the benefits of civilized society if he would be willing to relinquish them? Ask if the greatest of these blessings is not that order of society by which a man is deprived of the privilege of being the judge in his own cause—and give in exchange that barrier which is thrown around the weak, to guard him from the law of Force? Ask even the barbarian if he would be willing to be governed exclusively by the law of force? And yet the most polished nations have not adopted these first principles of civilization, as respects the transactions of nations—We may, without violating any principle of correct reasoning consider mankind thus scattered over the globe, still forming one community, of which the different nations are as families. Considering the whole as *one family*, which is certainly philosophical language, and then the different nations, answer to individuals—And whether, by analogy, we consider them as families or individuals, they have intercourse with each other, which becomes concentrated, brought to single points and managed by individuals. Hence they are reduced to a state to which the same rules and principles are applicable, that apply to individual concerns. And is it not strange that the fundamental principles of civil society should not be brought into operation as extensively as the intercourse between those who are sensible of the advantages of those checks of selfishness and power? Even if we leave principles of religion out of the question, is it not astonishing that the same motives which dictated the organization of civil society, should not have extended the same important principles as far as the intercourse between man and man rendered it necessary? When we consider how deeply mankind have suffered from a reliance in physical force, and an appeal to the passions of parties rather than to impartial judges, we are brought, however reluctantly, to see a striking resemblance between the relation of nations, reputed civilized, and that between men in an uncivilized state. It is a humiliating fact that after the lapse of nearly six thousand years—the most polished nations of the earth, as respects each other, have not adopted the first and simplest principles of civil society! When therefore, we look with astonishment at the ignorant Indian, when he prefers his simple but defective forms of government to ours, might not our astonishment increase, when we reflect, that *we*, with all our knowledge, with all the lights of science and religion that have been poured upon us, are still as incorrigible as the Indian, in adhering to principles and practices as barbarous—as irreconcilable to reason and religion and as destructive to human happiness as those to which the Indian is enslaved?

Considering the benefits resulting from the adoption of those principles by which controversies are taken out of the hands of the parties, and settled by impartial judges instead of an appeal to force—that years and ages have tested the utility of doing so—must we not ascribe the present mode of deciding national disputes, as perpetuated by the operation of some powerful, but unjustifiable causes? In looking for those causes, do we not find that a large and influential part of the community acquire emolument, and fame by the present mode of doing business? I do not attribute to this class any particular censure. They, however, are actuated by the

common feelings and passions of a very convenient one. That the men, and subject to the same dangerous warp of the judgment; by causes too generally influential on human actions. We are all sensible of the weakness of human nature, and therefore acknowledge the necessity of cutting off every inducement to do wrong. But in the case before us, there is a powerful interest created in favor of the present system. It is not entirely attributable to the present face of men, but is a part of the present state of society that forbids the abolition of war. Leaving this branch of the subject, which opens an extensive field of observation, I will draw to a conclusion for the present by stating a fact. It involves some unpleasant reflections it is true; but I acknowledge no bias from any party that has agitated the United States, during the late political dissensions.

When public transactions that have occurred within our own time, are brought into view, it is seldom that they can be considered with impartiality by all parties. There is such a thing as the pride of opinion, that generally lasts one generation at least. And so long as it exists, it has a powerful influence on the judgment. I am therefore aware that I select a hazardous subject for the elucidation of my views.

A difference arose between the United States and Great Britain, on several important points, the most material of which was, the right of searching armed vessels for the recovery of deserting seamen, or, as we considered it, the impressment of American seamen by the commanders of British ships of war. The two countries however considered the subject in very different points of view, and both thought they could not concede the point in dispute. The coals of enmity were finally blown into a flame, and a declaration of war was the consequence. They fought till both parties had suffered deeply. We fancied when we entered into the war, that it would be

good people of the United States might sit by their firesides—while England would not dare to do more than “wage a predatory war” on the commence of our citizens, with perhaps, some little pilfering along the coast. England, no doubt, thought she had nothing to fear. With a little of her surplus navy, every where invulnerable, she could spread alarm & distress from Main to New Orleans—and probably possess herself of some of our flourishing cities. And while her Navy would thus make the Atlantic States bend before her power, by enlisting the Indians on her side, she could raise the war whoop on our whole western frontier.

Such were the views of two nations of one common language and origin, and professing the same pure and pacific Religion.

They fought till they had sacrificed millions of dollars, and thousands of lives. They enlisted the heathen in their quarrels, and thus disgraced the name of christians. The United States suffered her Capital to be taken, her public buildings and archives were burnt by the enemy. The British suffered the loss of soldiers—the loss of officers & the loss of the boasted character of their navy. They suffered a defeat of a veteran army by militia just collected from their homes. At length, wearied with the contest, they sought for a termination of a war that promised nothing but injury to both sides. They did terminate it, leaving the great question just where they found it. They found that a decision on it was not absolutely necessary. And should it become necessary at a future period, it would then be open for discussion. But in the course of the contest, other questions had arisen or been brought into view that could not be left in the same manner: and on which the parties could no more agree than on the original points of dispute. In such a dilemma what was to be done?



Fight on? No—there was no use in that. The remedy, (as is always the case when war is the remedy) was worse than the disease. They agreed to submit the question in dispute to arbitration. A decision has been had, and thus ends the difficulty. In this arbitration the nation was not blown into a flame. No enmity was excited. The ordinary business of the two nations went on without interruption. No scalps were taken, no lives were lost in the camp or in the field: No millions of dollars were expended—nor was even a centinel in requisition.

Thus a fair experiment has been made, of the advantages of the two modes of settling national disputes—by war and by arbitration. The experiment was certainly a fair one. The parties were the same in both cases. It was as near the same period of time as the nature of the case could admit. In one case it respected "the rights of sailors" and in the other the rights of slave holders, and we knew that there cannot be a more delicate question, than one in which slaves are involved. The former, respecting sailors' rights could be left, the other could not. The efficacy of War failed, and with most tremendous consequences—But arbitration succeeded completely, and without a single evil following.

I will conclude with making a brief summary of what may be expected of the two modes of settling differences.

In an appeal to arms we cannot expect with any certainty, a decision of the question at all. Or if a decision is obtained, the great probability is that it will be an unjust one, a decision founded on the relative strength of the parties, and not on the merits of the question. Whether a decision is obtained or not, and if obtained, whether right or wrong, the cost may be expected to be a thousand times greater than the value of the original object. In all wars we are to expect the loss of many valuable lives. We are to expect that many, very many, who had no direct interest in the question, will be involved in the

greatest possible misery. We are to expect to be burdened for one, two, or three generations, with taxes, and pecuniary difficulties. And further, we are to expect that much moral depravity will be produced, and a long series of robberies, piracies, and villanies, in every varied form, will be produced on the community after the war is over.

By submitting to arbitration, we may expect to obtain a correct decision: because the merits of the question and not the physical force of the parties are to be tested. We may expect that it will be attended with very little expense, and the loss of no lives—and without danger of any outrage whatever. That no malevolent passions will be excited in the respective nations—no licence be given to crime, and no increase of moral depravity take place. Whoever consents to a war, consents to the sacrifice of the property and lives of his friends. He put also his own life and property at hazard. He hazards every thing that is dear to him, to his friends, and to the community. And lastly he opens the floodgates of Wickedness: for no one will pretend to deny that sin, to very large amount is the invariable concomitant of War.

If these statements are correct, and I defy the advocates for War to invalidate them, is it not astonishing that wise or good men should ever think of appealing to arms for the decision of national disputes?

A. B.

### To a Military Officer of Rank.

#### LETTER THE SECOND.

In my former letter,\* I took the liberty of speaking generally on the subject of promoting pacific principles. In that letter I endeavored to show that the progress of the doctrine was *harmless*. And not only *harmless*, but immediately conducive to the improvement of the condition of mankind. That it has softened the features of *war*—having already stripped it of more than half its enormities—and is now steadily, though slowly, approximating to the greatest blessing.

\* See page 81 vol. 1.

sing—a state of universal peace. Should the influence of pacific principles as inculcated in the Gospel, continue to increase, as it evidently *has* increased, it is obvious that a termination of wars *must* take place at some future period. For if it is admitted that the number of those who take no part in military operations is large and increasing, and that the general system of warfare is milder at present than at any past period, which will readily be granted, then it must also be confessed that the condition of mankind has been improved by the testimony against war: and also that a progress has been made towards its total abolition.

If these conclusions be admitted, and I presume they will, another conclusion forces itself irresistibly upon us: that to oppose the progress of pacific principles, by representing those principles as dangerous or absurd, and those who hold them as justly obnoxious to punishment, will be injurious to the great interests of humanity, of happiness and Religion.

The excellence of these principles has been displayed through the whole course of their progress. Look back and contemplate the character of the war spirit, as operating without any of those checks which arise out of the principles we are endeavoring to establish. The very feelings of our nature as well as those of our holy Religion recoil at the spectacle. Fraud, Treachery, Violence, Rapine, marked its progress at every step, "and triumphed in its ravages." And what was gained by all the blood and treasure—all the happiness and virtue that were sacrificed to the "odious passions of men?" Not safety; for even power itself was insecure, while treachery and deep revenge were forever on the alert, and redress of wrongs were lost in the

perpetual round of retaliation and fresh injuries. What was War, but an engine of ambition, avarice or revenge? In its descent to us it has been modified and softened, and stripped of many of its most shocking features, but in principle and general results it remains the same in *kind*, if not in degree.

If we question this assertion let us only cast our eyes over modern Europe. We shall find schemes of ambition and conquest unfolding themselves to our view. We shall see the most powerful empires convulsed by the private interests of a few individuals. Nations struggling to maintain the *balance of Power*, and individuals rising to the very summit of power, of wealth and fame, by their dreadful talent at destroying human life, and crippling the energies of opposing nations. These individuals hurled from the pinnacle of power, and their places supplied by new adventurers: while mighty armies have been the living machines for carrying on the projects of these individuals!

Look back, through the long vista of departed years, and say to what purpose have cities blazed, and devastation swept from the earth the fruits of industry and the fairest prospects of human happiness? To what purpose has the tide of conquest ebbed and flowed, burying every nation in the sanguinary deluge? A melancholy proof has been afforded of the power of man in committing evil. But an equally striking proof has been given of his utter incapacity to secure to himself the objects, for which he would, in the dreadful delirium sacrifice earth and Heaven. What did



Alexander of Macedon enjoy of human happiness? He was a Robber, a mad man, a debauche. He spent his life laboriously doing mischief to his species, and died at the age of 32, from excessive drunkenness!! His power, while he held it was not a source of enjoyment—He used it to make enemies and destroy them, and even to destroy his friends, to whom he owed his life. But his grasp of power tho' strong, was broken by a power mightier than his own. The very machine which he used for his horrid purpose was broken to pieces. Greece thus became the empress of the world sunk into weakness, and all the miseries of oppression and degradation.

The History of Rome and the madmen that presided over her, affords a similarity of scenes and consequences. Rome became, in time, what Greece had been—the mistress of the world. One bold adventurer after another rose to the highest eminence—to fall.—At length, the Roman Empire, like the Grecian confederacy, crumbled to ruins, and sunk into lasting degradation!!

I might bring the enumeration of examples down to our own time, but I forbear; as our moral vision is clear in proportion to the remoteness of the objects we contemplate.

Thus for instance, when we hear of human sacrifices offered to the emaginary deities of the Heathen, we congratulate ourselves on the superior light that we enjoy; and feel a degree of astonishment that human nature should ever have become so dark or depraved, as to be drawn into such

barbarous practices. And yet more human sacrifices have been offered at the shrine of *ambition*, within the last 20 years than ever were offered to all the heard of heathen deities put together, and through all the darkest ages of antiquity!! With all the light we enjoy—human sacrifices are still practised. They are not offered to Beings that we think can bless us—but to “the odious passions of men.”

The situation of the United States, are separated from those nations that have grown old in arms, and with whom the *habit* of military measures may have become inveterate: we may more easily adopt a different policy and thus become an example to the world.

There are no causes in existence in civil society which more powerfully tend to subvert liberty, and establish despotism than military discipline. Existing essentially in absolute rule, it reconciles men to the loss of liberty, confuses their ideas respecting the rights of man, and saps the foundation of self government. Nothing can possibly form a greater contrast with our favorite maxim of “Liberty and Equality,” than the principles of military government.

“I tremble for my country” when I observe an increasing fondness for military fame. If ever we become a military people, not only will our laurels be steeped in blood, and bedewed with the tears of widows and orphans—not only will a large accession be made to crime, and human depravity—But the principles of military government will insensibly give

acast to our civil institutions—men accustomed to military authority will acquire influence and civil power, and like the old world, we shall become *unprepared* to be free. We might then, like many nations, whose place is now lost on the map of the world, attract attention for awhile. We might inflict much suffering on our rivals for power or fame, and at least an equal portion on ourselves. And then sink into insignificance as military nations one after another have done, and will continue to do.

The sentence of Him that “has all power in heaven and earth” has been abundantly verified in the history of nations: “They that take the sword shall perish with the sword.”

There is a power which may be brought to operate upon human affairs that can disarm man of his savage propensities and the disposition to do wrong, and thus deprive him of his tremendous capacity to evil.

All the pure characteristics of *war* are displayed by those beings which we dread or abhor, while the principles and temper for which we contend, are derived from Heaven, and assimilate us to the Divine Nature. It is very possible for man, so to bear the image of his God, as to be but a little lower than the angels. But with this inestimable privilege, it is equally possible for him to realize the character of Tigers, Lions, wolves and Devils. No one that has ever contemplated the extent of human depravity, will be disposed to withhold his assent from this assertion.

Whence do we derive our ideas of *honor, dignity, and excellence*? It would very naturally be supposed that those who believe in a being unlimited in wisdom power & goodness, should draw the ir-

ideas of excellence from that supreme source. And when we remember that the son of God, condescended to take human nature on himself, thus illustrating the highest dignity to which it can be exalted, for it was united to the *Divine* nature, how does it happen that we make choice of another standard by which we desire to be measured? But we turn from the Divine Example of Jesus Christ. We consider it not *greatness*: not worthy of imitation. We have heard of Lions Spreading the terrors of their might among their fellows of the forest. We have heard of tigers unconquerable by force, and Devils unwearied in making war on human happiness. Alas! is it possible that we shall adopt these as models of imitation, in aspiring to greatness? Let us draw the comparison—let us find all the resemblances between a *hero* in his genuine heroic character, and Jesus Christ. We seek for resemblances in vain—We find contrasts at every step; but no resemblances. But we readily discover where resemblances may be found. I forbear drawing the comparison in the detail, for man, misguided man, is still my brother.

I have no personal allusion in the remarks I have made: they apply to the general state of the question, and the principles involved in it.

(To be Continued.)

### Notice.

The Editor being about to leave home on the 2nd inst. on a journey of considerable length, it is not probable that he will return before the time in course for issuing the next number. Should this be the case, the opportunity will be embraced for relieving our files of some articles that have been on hand a considerable time.